(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) to (d) India has taken effective steps for global cooperation in the field of agriculture. Agreements/Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) have been signed with 31 countries for bilateral cooperation in the field of agriculture including phytosanitary and veterinary agreements. The objective of bilateral Agreements/MOUs is to exchange experiences of agricultural development between countries and to extend mutual benefit and cooperation for each other's development.

The Agreements on Plan Quarantine and Plant Protection and in the Veterinary field aim, *inter-alia,* at the prevention of the penetration and spreading of quarantine pests, plant diseases and weeds and spread of infective diseases on the territories of both the countries while trading in agricultural products, animals, animal products, raw materials of animal origin and animal feed. These kind of agreements facilitate development of India's trade in agricultural and veterinary products with these countries.

India is an active member of several international organisations, such as, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Food Programme etc. India is also a beneficiary of the programmes of all these organisations.

Food Processing Industries in Orissa

1527. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the lack of Food Processing Industries in the country particularly in the Eastern States;

(b) whether these units are microscopic in number in State like Orissa;

(c) if so, the steps to set up adequate number of Food Processing units in Orissa and other States where these units are very inadequate in number; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI

SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) to (d) As per Annual Survey of Industries 1997-98 the total number of Food Processing Units in the factory sector in the Country were 31415, out of which 2888 units are located in the Eastern including the North East. In addition to this 323 Food Processing and Training Centres have been set up in the Country under the Plan Assistance of this Department so far, out of this 143 Centres have been set up in the Eastern States. Owing to the Food Processing being high risk and low margin, there is general reluctance amongst entrepreneurs to set up industries in this sector. The number of units in the Food Processing Sector set up in the Eastern States (Including Orissa) is proportionately less. In order to boost the setting up of these industries, the Department operates a number of Plan Schemes to provide assistance and act as catalyst to facilitate setting up of such units by State/Cooperative/Private Agencies all over the Country including the Eastern States.

Modification in Agriculture Insurance Scheme

1528. SHRI RAMACHANDRAIAH RUMANDLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for changes in the Agriculture Insurance Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) when would it be made effective?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) to (c) No Sir. However, the new Scheme i.e. National Agriculture Insurance Scheme (NAIS) provides for a review after one year of its implementation and therefore, changes if any, on the basis of experience can be considered for incorporation in the scheme from the next year.

Scheme for Amelioration of Acid Soils

1529. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Karnataka has requested for release of financial assistance under the Centrally-sponsored scheme for amelioration of acid soils and reclamation of saline including coastal saline